

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

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A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the  
old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers

Vol. 52 No. 6

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Whole No. 570

## Dime Novels

By Edward T. LeBlanc

### OLD SLEUTH'S OWN.

No. 79

## BREEZY FRANK;

OR,

A GREAT DISGUISE.

STORY OF A BOY'S WONDERFUL CUNNING.

By OLD SLEUTH.



THE KEEPER RUSHED FORTH

New York  
J. S. OGILVIE PUBLISHING COMPANY,  
67 RUSE STREET.

DIME NOVEL SKETCHES No. 240

OLD SLEUTH'S OWN

Publisher: J. S. Ogilvie Publishing Co., 57 Rose St., New York, New York.  
Issues: 146 (The first 15 numbers are believed to be non-existing. These 15 numbers were added on at the end of the series. It has been surmised that the plates were damaged soon after or even before the Ogilvie edition was published. The earliest number advertised by Ogilvie is 10, though most lists start at 16). Dates: 1905-1915. Schedule: Issued sporadically in groups. Size: 7½x4¾". Pages: 100 to 120. Price: 10c. Illustration: Black and white pictorial cover on yellow paper. Author: Harlan Page Halsey under pseudonym Old Sleuth. The Ogilvie edition was reprinted from those published by the Parlor Car Publishing Company in the 1890's. Parlor Car Publishing Co. was a publishing pseudonym of George Munro.



## Dime Novels

By Edward T. LeBlanc

First, it is necessary to define our subject, Dime Novels. The term has undergone many changes from its first use by Beadle in 1860 when he published a series of novels and called the series, "Beadle's Dime Novels." The term has been applied to all inexpensive paper backs ever since. However, it is necessary to be more specific, as most British and American literature were also issued in paperback and in fact many of them still are being published. Charles Bragin, the dean of dime novel collectors during the 1930's and 40's issued a dime novel bibliography in which he defined the term, dime novels as "Lurid literature of the American west, detectives, bandits, etc., etc." The key to his definition is "lurid literature." Other collectors used the term, "blood and thunder." So, for our purposes we are describing dime novels whose formats were also used by publishers to issue the works of such noted literary figures as Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, James Fenimore Cooper, and even William Shakespeare, whose works can hardly be called dime novels. So in addition to format, which in many cases were the same for both classes of "literature" we need to be concerned with the type of story being published.

Before Beadle issued his dime novels, novels were being issued and had been issued since the 1830s and possibly before. These were somewhat larger in size and usually sold for 25c. Twenty-five cents for reading matter was out of the reach of most people. Wages were \$1.00 a day for most laboring positions. Farm labor was usually for room and board and very little else. The compulsory school laws had created a demand for reading material. The general public could now read and write and in a society that had few sources of entertainment, the time was ripe for cheap novels. Erastus Beadle who had been publishing a juvenile magazine and song sheets in Buffalo, New York migrated to New York City where he began publishing penny song books. He recognized the market and launched a series of ten cent novels and called them Beadles Dime Novels. This was in June 1860.

The Beadles were often referred to as yellow backs, but their distinctive color was not yellow but more of a burnt orange color. The series lasted 321 issues when the name was changed to Beadles New Dime Novels and lasted another 309 issues, all reprints of the earlier issues. This time the covers were colored, the colors being applied individually with stencils. They make an attractive looking booklet.

A very short time after Beadle began publishing his dime novels, there were imitators or rival publishers. Foremost of these was Munro's Ten Cent Novels, published by George Munro, who had been foreman of the Beadle

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printing plant. A myriad of other publishers entered the field, DeWitt's Ten Cent Romances. Ornum's Ten Cent Novels, Ten Cent Novelettes published in Boston. This original dime novel format lasted until 1884. However, in 1877, a new format appeared which proved very popular. This was the quarto size, a standard sheet of printing paper folded to produce a 16 page pamphlet 8½x12½. Beadle was one of the first publishers to publish these. He started a series called Beadles Dime Library which lasted until 1905 with 1103 numbers. He also started Beadles Half-dime Library which also lasted until 1905. These had a lurid black and white illustration on the cover, and those illustrations are what most collectors look for. Other publishers entered the field, Frank Tousey with the Wide Awake Library, George Munro with Old Sleuth Library, and his brother Norman with the Old Cap Collier Library. As previously stated, by 1884 the booklet type of dime novel had been completely replaced by the black and white libraries. In the late 1880's Street & Smith entered the field with its Log Cabin Library. They soon had a number of libraries in print, including the Nugget Library, New York 5c Library, Nick Carter Library and many others. Beadles followed suit with a number of other series to support his two main publications, Beadles Pocket Library, Beadles Boys Library, Beadles Popular Library.

In 1896 Street & Smith introduced a cover in color. This was Tip Top Weekly which featured the adventures of Frank Merriwell. Within a year, most dime novels were being published with colored covers. Beadle failed about this time, 1896, and the business was sold to M. J. Ivers who continued the libraries until 1905. They also reprinted some of the series with colored covers, Deadwood Dick Library and Beadles Boys Library. These were short lived. The competition of S&S and Frank Tousey was too much, though Beadle stories were some of the last to be reprinted. In 1908 the Arthur Westbrook Company bought out the M. J. Ivers Co. and continued to reprint some of the Beadle stories until the 1930's. From the late 1890's through 1915 when the last of the original dime novels were published in the field, was divided between S&S and Frank Tousey, though the Arthur Westbrook Co. made a splurge with the reprinting of the Old Sleuth stories in colored covers.

A review of the principal formats: The booklet type, 6¼x4" with 100 pages, from 1860 through 1884; the pamphlet type with black and white illustrated covers 8½x12½" and some smaller, 1877 through 1905. The pamphlet type with colored covers from 1896 through 1919. All through this period the serial story papers also flourished. These were newspaper size sheets often with a huge black and white illustration taking up most of the cover. They were family oriented with romances for the women of the household, western and adventure yarns for the men, and for the younger folks, juvenile stories. These predated the dime novel by a number of years. Foremost among these were The New York Mercury, The New York Ledger, New York Weekly, Family Story Paper and Fireside Companion. We shouldn't forget Beadles entry in the field, The Saturday Journal and later the Banner Weekly. There were also a number of these serial papers devoted to the boys, from the age when they began to read to their late teens, Boys of New York, Young Men of America, Boys and Girls Weekly, Golden Weekly, Golden Hours, Golden Days, Boys of America, Happy Days and some others. The stories appearing in these as serials were later reprinted in dime novel format.

Also contemporary with the dime novels, beginning around 1880 was the pocket book, similar to the present day ones. These published literary works



of both America and England as well as translations from the French, German and others. Foremost among these was the Seaside Library published by George Munro. It made his fortune. He had many imitators. His brother Norman issued a similar library and called it Munro's Library. Publishers of these grew a thousandfold. One has to wonder at the growth at the literacy in the U. S. in so short a time.

With the change over to the black and white "pamphlets" in 1877 came a change in the type of story told. Up to this point most of the stories were about American history in some form or other, including contemporary western history. Stories of Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Colonial wars with Indians and Sea stories predominating. The Civil War was not forgotten, though most stories about the Civil War came later. There were also border romances, with a heavy emphasis on Indian fighting. In 1877 Beadles introduced the name hero, Deadwood Dick, and until the late 1890's his adventures were recounted on a monthly basis. In 1869 Street and Smith had published two serials by Ned Buntline about Buffalo Bill. Beadle during the 1880's began featuring stories about Buffalo Bill and soon Buffalo Bill was featured in some way by all dime novel publishers. Street & Smith later, in 1902 published a series called Buffalo Bill Stories which lasted until 1919 and in reprint pocket book form until 1933.

In 1886 Street & Smith published in their New York Weekly a serial entitled The Old Detective's Pupil. The pupil in the story was Nick Carter. They featured serial and short stories in the New York Weekly quite regularly and he proved to be so popular that in 1891 they started a series devoted exclusively to his exploits, The Nick Carter Library. With the advent of the colored covers the name was changed to New Nick Carter Weekly and continued in weekly form through 1915 or so. Reprints in pocket form continued until 1933. They continued his saga with Nick Carter Magazine. And in the modern era the name Nick Carter is being used by a pocket book publisher in issuing a series of James Bond type adventures. At last count there had been 185 of these issued.

In 1896 Frank Merriwell was introduced by Street & Smith. Frank and his brother Dick were featured for 850 weekly issues and then a son, Frank, Jr. continued the sports adventures for another 136 weeks in New Tip Top Weekly. There had been other sports heroes, but Frank was the paragon of them all. He had imitators, Fred Fearnot became his fiercest rival. His adventures were chronicled in Work and Win Weekly published by Frank Tousey. Work and Win began in 1898 and continued until 1925. Other imitators included Phil Rushington, Jack Lightfoot, Dick Daresome, Jack Standfast and countless others.

In the late 1880's, Street and Smith began publishing paperback books in series as a vehicle for keeping their stories in print. Many of the stories that were appearing in their New York Weekly in serial form had been purchased outright and to make use of them, the paperback book was the best means. The Detective stories were used in the Secret Service Series. Their Sea and Shore Series carried the adventure tales and the Select Series, the romances. This was the beginning of the dime novel type paperback. Street and Smith kept reprinting the stories and adding new ones, changing series names and again reprinting the same stories. Their weekly series or libraries were reprinted in this form three or four weekly issues to one book. In this way the Frank Merriwell stories were kept in print on a forever basis until their demise in the 1930's during the great depression.



Frank Tousey, the most successful dime novel publisher after Street and Smith did not convert to paperback books but continued to issue his dime novel series well into the 1920's. The size was changed to smaller dimensions, the stories edited to fit the lesser space. Tousey died in the early teens but the series continued under new management. The last series to fold was Pluck and Luck which issued its last number, No. 1605, in 1929.

Tousey's mainstay are known to collectors as the big six: Pluck and Luck featured adventures stories, Work and Wiin, the adventures of Fred Fearnot mostly in sports, Secret Service where the exploits of the Bradys, detectives par excellence were featured; Liberty Boys of '76 where a group of 100 young men won the war against Britain and gained the colonies their independence; Wild West Weekly, here Young Wild West, better known as "Wild" tamed the West; Fame and Fortune, stories of boys who made money, mostly in Wall Street, but in every kind of business endeavor imaginable.

Street & Smith had a big five group: Brave and Bold where adventure was featured, Tip Top Weekly, sports, Nick Carter Weekly, detective and mystery, Diamond Dick Weekly, a western hero in a more modern western setting, the days railroad, though there was plenty of action on the stage coach trails as well. Buffalo Bill Stories, these feature the west of the Indian and cavalry wars, buffalo hunting, and the west of an earlier day.

Both Tousey and Street & Smith published many short lived series which found their way into other publications when sales dropped off during the 1910's and 20's. In the end Street & Smith bought out the Frank Tousey line using the names to continue in the pulp field with new and a different kind of story.

During the early 1920's the early dime novels became collectors' items. Foremost among the early collectors was Dr. Frank P. O'Brien who donated much of his collection to the New York Public Library. In 1925 three collectors, Ralph F. Cummings, Ralph P. Smith and William J. Benners began a publication called the Happy Hours Magazine with Ralph Smith as editor and publisher. During 1930 Ralph F. Cummings became the editor and publisher. With the January 1931 issue he changed the name to Dime Novel Roundup. Basically this group of collectors banded together to swap dime novels to read and to fill in gaps in their collections. Back issues could be had in most second hand book stores and many large collections were built up. The George Hess collection was one of the larger ones and went upon his death to the University of Minnesota. The University has since built up the collection further by purchase and with bequest by other collectors.

Values are difficult to determine, however most colored covers and black and white dime novels sell at \$3.00 to \$5.00 each when in very good to pristine condition. To the specialized collector who may want a specific issue or a specific subject such as science-fiction the prices will run higher. If a collector buys in large lots the price becomes much lower per item. The dime novels of the 1860's and 70's sell for \$15.00 to \$20.00 each. There are some exceptions. #1, Maleaska was sold recently for \$600. Stories about real characters such as California Joe, Texas Jack, Wild Bill Hickock and others tend to sell at higher prices with Jesse James novels leading the pack and the \$10.00 figure.

It is difficult to generalize about dime novel content since they cover a wide period of time, 50 years, 1860 to 1910-20. The early stories were aimed at an adult readership and an attempt by the author was made at writing a good story. During the 1870's the stories deteriorated markedly, the demand



was great and writers turned out 30,000 word stories each and every week. The writer decided on a beginning and an ending and filled in the middle with any number of incidents which a fanciful imagination could conceive. When the required length had been reached he melded in his ending and the story was complete.

However, dime novels covered every possible contemporary subject imaginable, circus, railroading, firefighting, sports, mystery, detectives of every kind, science fiction and fantasy, adventure in far away places, sea stories with polar exploration being one of the favorite subjects, but by far the westerns were their mainstay, from Indian fighting on the plains to the mining camps of the gold fields.

They make a fascinating item to collect, and there are more collectors today than ever before. Many universities have taken up collecting with a view of preserving a bit of America's past.

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### LETTERS

Dear Ed:

Sorry to hear of Ralph Cummings' death. He was a real nice man. I had quite a few years of correspondence with him, but had only visited his place once. Moe Owen and I went up to visit him. May he rest in peace.

Bob Chenu

Dear Eddie:

Read the many tributes to Ralph Cummings in the latest Roundup, including yours. Ralph was a dear friend of many people, including me. We had been pen pals for almost 40 years. We all shall miss him very much.

Richard H. Minter

Dear Eddie:

I was saddened by the contents of the October issue of the Round-up, but what a fine person Ralph Cummings must have been and how I regret not having known him! Do you suppose his long life might have been caused by his having such a devotion to a subject like dime novels . . . on to which he could turn to at any time? No real retirement for him!

J. Randolph Cox

Dear Ed,

I read with interest Bob Chenu's article "Lewis E. Theiss and his Juvenile Books" in "Dime Novel Roundup" #569. There is one point which I would like to bring out in order to help clarify the record.

Mr. Chenu states in a note that the title "Trailing the Air Mail Bandit" was published by Wilcox and Follett; however, according to the "National Union Catalog of pre-1956 Imprints," this title was published by Wilde also.

It is interesting to note that the next title on the list, "The Flying Reporter," is listed in the "National Union Catalog of pre-1956 Imprints" as first published by Wilde in 1930 and then republished by Wilcox and Follett in 1946. Perhaps, Mr. Chenu was attempting to make some reference to that point and it somehow came out garbled in the final production.

Sincerely yours, Wictor A. Berch,

Special Collections Librarian, Braindeis University



## A GENTLEMAN FROM VIRGINIA

By Jack Schorr

George Cary Eggleston

1839—1911

Attorney, Author and Editor

He was born in Vevay, Indiana November 26, 1839 of rugged stock. His father was a Virginian colonist, one of the Southern aristocracy. His mother was of Scotch-Irish origin, who had a great influence on his early development. He was raised in a strict Methodist home. His mother encouraged and developed his early reading habits. He was an avid reader in his youth. He heard many tales from his father about the romantic ante-bellum period in the South, and about his mother's forebears in their struggles in the early days in our country, which provided background material for his later adult and juvenile books. When he was 17 years old, he inherited his family's plantation in Amelia County, Virginia. He was whisked into an aristocratic, genial leisurely life that astonished and charmed him, for a short time.

(During a period of straitened circumstances he taught school in a rural area known as Ricker Ridge, a one-room school house, which inspired his brother George after hearing Edward's tales as a school master, to write his famous classic, "A Hoosier School Master.")

He attended Indiana-Asbury University (De Pauw University now) and later to Richmond College, Virginia, where he studied law.

After graduation he just got started on establishing his law practice when the Civil War reared its ugly head and interrupted his career. He enlisted with fervor for the Southern cause and served with the famous J.E.B. Stuart's First Regiment of Virginia in the Black Horse Cavalry. Then he was transferred to Longstreet's Artillery Corps where he served with distinction until the war ended. He saw active duty from Bull Run to Appomattox and commanded a mortar fort with his brother at Petersburg during the siege. After the war he returned to the practice of law for a short time.

Then he went to Cairo to take a position with a banking and steamship firm. In 1868, he married Marion Craggs. Later he practiced law in Mississippi. In 1870, because he found his work was uncongenial, he moved his wife and child to New York City, to pursue a literary career. This began a rewarding newspaper and editorial career.

He started as a reporter on the Brooklyn "Union" and he was rapidly promoted to editorial staff. In 1877, he went with "Hearth and Home," a very popular New York publication of which Eggleston was responsible for bringing well known and respected writers to the staff, among them being Frank R. Stockton.

William Cullen Bryant of The New York Evening Post was acquainted with Eggleston and persuaded him to come join the Post. Shortly, Eggleston was appointed literary editor. Eggleston felt very strongly about many things, especially he felt that literary genius should not be always confined to British writers, but there were just as many here in this country. When he felt strongly about anything, he would go all out on editorials. It took the fatherly and kindly advice of William Cullen Bryant to keep him in rein. They became fast friends and he sought Bryant's advice on many things which was of great help to him.

He remained with the Post until 1887. He began to write extensively



for well known publications such as "Atlantic Monthly" and Appleton's Journal. In 1894, he drew upon his ample Civil War experiences, and wrote a series of papers called "A Rebel's Recollections" and very successful it was. It was published in book form by Houghton & Mifflin Co.

He wrote a few excellent boys' books that were well written, in which he did not moralize. He drew upon his own early boyhood experiences and they proved most interesting. He would use his own boys as critics for them.

He wrote adult romances of the pre-Civil War Virginian period like his "Dorothy South" in 1902, "Master of Warlock," 1903, "Evelyn Byrd" in 1904 and seven other novels, plus numerous articles and short stories for varied publications. There are 4 or 5 of his books still in print at this date.

The boys' books he wrote are as follows:

The Big Brother Series, published by G. P. Putnam & Sons—  
3 volume set

"The Big Brother," 1875—Story of Indian War

"Captain Sam," 1876—The Boy Scouts of 1814

"The Signal Boys," 1877—Captain Sam's Company

"The Wreck of the Red-Bird," A story of the Carolina Coast,  
G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1882

"The Last of The Flatboats," A story of the Mississippi  
Lothrop, 1900. Illustrated by Charlotte Harding

"Camp Venture," Story of the Virginia Mountains  
Lothrop, 1901. Illustrated by W. A. McCullough

"The Bale Marked X," A Blockade-Running Adventure.  
Lothrop, 1902. Illustrated by C. Charles Emerson

"Running the River," A Story of Adventures and Success  
A. S. Barnes & Co., 1904. Illustrated by Wm. L. Hudson

"Jack Shelby," A story of the Indiana Backwoods  
Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., 1906. Illustrated by G. W. Picknell

"Long Knives," A story of How They Won the West  
Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1907. Illustrated by Frank T. Merrill

"What Happened at Quasi," The story of a Carolina Cruise  
Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1911. Illustrated by H. C. Edwards

The above information was obtained through the Dictionary of American Biography, Volume III, U S. Cumulative Index, and my collection of Eggleston books.

Note: These books sold for \$1.75 at date of publication, which may or may not surprise you. I keep forgetting juvenile books were higher in price for the times, until the advent of the 50c era.

### SOME PUZZLING ALGER TRIVIA

By Stanley A. Pachon

In doing research into books and authors one comes upon some puzzling items which it is difficult and sometimes impossible to come up with an answer.

In a large, well illustrated volume titled "Famous Authors and the Best Literature of England America," published by the Standard Publishing Co. of Philadelphia, not dated but copyrighted by W. E. Scull. The book is divided into two volumes, volume one covers the "Literature of England" and volume two the Literature of America. Each author is given a brief bio-



graphical sketch also a picture of him if available and an excerpt of the author's work is included.

What makes the second part "Literature of America" more interesting, under the heading "Popular Writers for Young People" contains pictures, sketches and excerpts of the works of Martha Finley, Edward S. Ellis, Louisa M. Alcott, "Oliver Optic," Sara Jane Lippencott and also Horatio Alger, Jr.

There is a page and a half of information on Alger and his work, and an excerpt "How Dick Began His Day" from "Ragged Dick." In the biographical sketch Alger's birth year is given as 1834. (One cannot fault the writer of the sketch for his error, it stems from the fact that Alger in his later years gave 1834 as the date.) When approached by the editor of the first volume of Whos Who for biographical details gave 1834 and so it appeared. Another instance was when G. A. Bacon in 1894 asked Alger for a photograph and biography for use in the game of "Authors," Alger stated "born 1834."

In listing some of the books Alger wrote, the writer states "His first published book was "Bertha's Christmas Vision" (1855). Succeeding this came "Nothing To Do! A Tilt at our best Society," in verse (1857) "Frank's Campaign, or what a boy can do" (1864) "Helen Ford" a novel and also a volume of poems (1866).

If the writer would have stated instead "Helen Ford" a novel (1866) and also a volume of poems, one could assume that he had reference to "Grand-ther Baldwin's Thanksgiving" published in 1876, but as he states there was a volume of poems published the same year as "Helen Ford" in 1866. This raises an interesting question, what was this volume? and was it published anonymously?

## FOR SALE TO HIGHEST BIDDER

ALL PUBLISHED BY GEORGE SULLY & COMPANY, NEW YORK

By Vance Barnum

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## MUSINGS OF AN OLD TIME PRINTER

By H. W. Miller, ye Roundup Printer

My connection with printing has spanned nearly sixty years—covering the period when there was still a lot of handset types, through the linotype and to but not through the current offset period.

In the junior high where I learned printing, type was set up by hand for a four page paper each two weeks. Type is based on a point system, 72 points to an approximate inch—originally a French system. At first there were quite a few odd sizes—17 point, 34 point, etc., finally becoming standard sizes. Originally each size had a name, from brilliant ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  pt.!) through nonpareil, brevier, to pica—12 to an inch still used in connection with some typewriter sizes. The school paper was set in 10 point type—not too bad a size to learn on—my first “professional” work entailed an 8 point type (9 lines to an inch) and much more difficult to handle.

Many of the early dime novels were set in this small size type, and I have nightmares thinking about standing (no sitting!) at a type case from morning to night, poor lighting, setting type by hand. At least in later years some type foundries came out with combinations “the,” “and” and longer words cast together so one “pick-up” would cover several letters at a time. “Mr.” “Mrs.” etc. were quite common for country newspapers. But the “comps” (hand compositors) were proficient. Using a “stick” (a rectangular three-sided metal frame) held in the left hand, type was picked up by the right and placed upside down (type is always read that way, from left to right), more by feel than sight as there are nicks on the side away from the comp.

Justification of the lines was the chore. To make each line the same length, spaces of different thickness were used. If a line was too tight, regular spaces were taken out and thinner ones used. If too loose, thicker ones were used. A good comp had a sixth sense on whether a line was going to be too tight or loose. None of the dividing of words except where they should be! Not like now where one syllable words are divided, or at the wrong place—where “therapist” may turn out “the-rapist”! What a blessing it would have been to have been able to use the zig-zag right hand margin seen on many magazines today!

The type case itself has really not been changed much for a couple of hundred years or more. Two cases, the lower, and the upper for capital letters. The cap case (left half for small caps, right half for regular caps) for instance runs in alphabetical order EXCEPT the J and U are added at the end as they came later in the alphabet. If you have ever noticed, and wondered why, on some older buildings the word justice is spelled JVSTICE—the U came “later.” The W (double-u) is actually two Vs. The lower case is based on the most used letters are in the larger and most accessible boxes. Basically, any printer would be at home in any shop in the country. Naturally some changes had to be made for ethnic publications—throw in about 6 to 10 extra accentuated characters in some languages!

Because it would require the tying up of too much foundry type to keep pages standing for later reruns, stereotype plates were used for actual printing and too, they were coated with a thin layer of copper on a thin lead base and would stand up much better to longer press runs. So then the type was distributed back into the cases for further use—by the printers devil usually—and he’d better do a good job. Held in the left hand between thumb and second finger, the first finger underneath for support, words were picked off from the end and dropped in the proper boxes letter for letter. A sneeze at



the wrong time would be disastrous!

These page electros would be locked up on a special base for the old flat bed, sheet fed presses. It would be safe to say that somewhere between the author's copy and the finished press run, accidents might occur. You no doubt have seen some of the dime novels with a little spacing between the lines at the start, none towards the end. This meant that the type wasn't going to come out even with the number of pages to be run. Then lead strips could be put between the lines at the first. A true comp used a "composing rule"—a steel piece that could be placed after a line was set and then moved to the next line to be set. Hand set type could be (and too often was) pied, with a handful (or a page!) of loose type!

The stereo plates could work loose on the press or something hard could drop in while running and damage them. Occasionally in reprints one will notice a page or so set in a different type—or a page edge or corner with letters missing. This could be by loss or damage of plates while in storage before another publisher bought them. Where type is different, there is a possibility that the story is altered—did the new publisher have a copy of the original? Or did he improvise to fill a gap?

Linotypes, casting a whole line on a solid lead slug, came in in the early 1890s, much improved over earlier typesetting machines. Run from a keyboard they automatically justify a line—a godsend for the printer—yet, many comps believed, with justification, they would lose their jobs to the new automation. There's nothing new under the sun, many older printer are now losing their jobs to the younger men who know the newer offset processes!

The Monotype which sets and casts individual pieces of type is used for some books—but there is still the possibility of "pi."

I wonder if the old dime novel individual comp set a whole issue, or parts? Newspapers often split an article between different typesetters, especially as a deadline neared. Did they do that to dime novels? Did they "read ahead" to find the outcome of a story? I've set some very interesting articles for the Roundup—the more interesting, the faster I set (but not necessarily error-free!)

We've now hit another era in publishing, no more type, "typesetters" now have never seen a piece of type! Offset is the means of publishing, words on paper, the paste pot, negatives, chemicals, pictures, then thin aluminum plates, special fast running presses—a far cry from the early dime novels!

They served their purpose, they brought literacy to an illiterate era—now those old dime novels are a historical record of what our ancestors read and what we re-read—and we love them!

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### NEWS NOTES

Back in the 1920's Ralph Cummings and other dime novel collectors were busy writing letters to the editors of western and other magazines. Their purpose was to discover dime novel hordes, and they succeeded very well. Walker Martin of 432 Latona Ave., Trenton, N. J. 08618 sent in a page from the Sept. 3, 1925 issue of Ace High Magazine with letters from Ralph Cummings and Bob Smeltzer. Bob was a heavy contributor to the early issues of the Happy Hour Magazine and the Dime Novel Roundup.

Dear Mr. Hersey: This clipping will give you a good idea of some of the old timers we like. It is true, the Beadles Weekly was the best weekly in America. The Beadles Weekly is wanted by all the collectors very badly. I haven't any Beadles Weekly in my collection, but I hope to have some day.



I have quite a few of each of these: Beadles Dime Library, Beadles Half Dime Library, Beadles Pocket Library, Beadles Boys Library, Beadles Deadwood Dick Library, Beadles Frontier Series, Beadles Popular Library. I have over 100 Boys of New York and many others. Some of my novels and story papers cost me 5c each, and some 25c, 35c and 50c each. So you see I've paid pretty dear for some of them. I have some of the Claude Duval Series that I pay 50c and 75c each in order to get them.

I prize my collection very highly. I've had over 7,000 novels. But have sold some of the current issues that I had and gave around 6,500 weeklies and libraries and story papers.

#### RECKLESS RALPH, The Dime Novel King

Lydia Godfrey, a Roundup member for many years, received her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland recently. Her dissertation was titled THEODORE DREISER AND THE DIME NOVEL WORLD; or, The Missing Chapter in Dreiser's Life. Mrs. Godfrey has promised to summarize her dissertation in an article for the Roundup.

The Bowling Green University Popular Press of Bowling Green, Ohio 43403 has issued these books on the pulps.

ONE LONELY KNIGHT. Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer, by Allan Collins and James L. Taylor. 186 pages, cloth bound, \$19.95, soft bound \$8.95.

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